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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

ACDA-19 IO-12 SCI-06 GAC-01 SCEM-02 SAJ-01 NIC-01

EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 RSR-01 /147 W
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R 131717 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9217
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E. O. 11652: N/ A
TAGS: TECH, GW, FR, UR
SUBJECT: FRENCH PRESS REACTION TO GERMAN PURCHASE OF SOVIET
URANIUM ENRICHMENT

REF: BONN 05433

1. EARLY FRENCH PRESS REPORTS ON SOVIET 30 MILLION D MARK SALE OF URANIUM ENRICHMENT SERVICES TO GERMANY TOOK FOR OF DESCRIPTION OF CONTRACT WITH COMMENT DRAWN FROM DER SPIEGEL (REF). PAPERS NOTED
THAT GERMAN PURCHASE FOLLOWS SIMILAR 1971 PURCHASE BY FRENCH AND ALSO THAT SOVIET PRICE IS BELOW U. S. AEC' S. DISCREPANCY EXISTS IN REPORTS OF AMOUNTS OF SEPARATIVE WORK UNITS, SOME PAPERS IN- DICATING 500,000 SWU' S, OTHERS 300,000. LE FIGARO STATED OPINION THAT OBJECTIVE OF PURCHASE IS TO AVOID LONG- TERM COMMITMENT TO AMERICANS AND PROVIDE BREATHING SPACE IN HOPE THAT EUROPEAN ENRICHMENT PLANT CAN BE BUILT.

2. TWO DAYS LATER, LES ECHOS CARRIED FEATURED ANALYSIS OF GERMAN PURCHASE WITH TITLE AND MAJOR THEME BEING QUOTE - USSR COMPETES WITH U. S. IN SUPPLYING ENRICHED URANIUM TO EUROPEAN USERS. END QUOTE. ARTICLE QUOTES SPOKESMAN FOR SOVIET FIRM LICENSINTORG
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THAT SOVIETS PREPARED TO SUPPLY GERMAN BUYERS WITH $2 10 MILLION IN ENRICHMENT SERVICES IF AUTHORIZED. IT NOTES SOVIET OVERTURES TO SWEDEN, HOLLAND, BELGIUM AND SWITZERLAND. LES ECHOS ARTICLE PLACES GERMAN PURCHASE IN CONTEXT OF GENERAL ENERGY PROBLEM CITING
IT AS ONE OF FOUR FACTORS IN INCREASING EUROPEAN RELIANCE ON NUCLEAR POWER. OTHER THREE FACTORS ARE CONSTRUCTION OF FRENCH-SPONSORED EUROPEAN PLANT, ANGLO- DUTCH- GERMAN DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRI-
FUGE TECHNOLOGY, AND USAEC PROPOSED LONG- TERM ENRICHMENT COMMITMENTS.
REGARDING AEC PROPOSAL, ARTICLE STATES THAT QUOTE AMERICANS WANT TO TIE THEIR LONG- TERM RELATIONS TO A KIND OF EXCLUSIVE SALES WHICH WOULD IPSO FACTO PREVENT THE POSSIBILITY OF CONSTRUCTING A EUROPEAN PLANT. END QUOTE.

3. COMMENT: IN CONVERSATION WITH SCIATT AND AEC REP, ASSISTANT TO CHIEF INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF FRENCH NUCLEAR AGENCY RENOU GAVE WHAT APPEARS TO BE LOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF OFFICIAL FRENCH VIES. HE SAID THE DID NOT THINK THAT RUSSIAN ENTRY INTO EUROPEAN ENRICHMENT MARKET WOULD IMPEDE PROGRESS TOWARD DEVELOPING A EUROPEAN
CAPABILITY FUT WOULD PROVIDE WELCOME DIVERSIFICATION OF SOURCE OF ENRICHMENT SERVICES.
IRWIN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
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